

RECEIVED

Reno Public Meeting  
October 4, 2001

KAITLIN BACKLUND: My name is Kaitlin,

OCT 04 2001

552274

10 K-a-i-t-l-i-n, last name Backlund, B-a-c-k-l-u-n-d. I'm  
11 here as a person who lives in Nevada, grew up in Nevada,  
12 but I'm also the Executive Director of Citizen Alert,  
13 which means nothing if all of you were not in the room.  
14 I'm here to say -- because I'm going to come back, I have  
15 a lot to say.

16 This is finally an opportunity where we get  
17 to speak about this project without being constrained by  
18 having to speak to a particular document. We get to say  
19 what's on our mind here at this hearing, and I just want  
20 to start off -- and I hope everybody in the room will  
21 follow me through, and then we can come back for more  
22 thorough comments -- but I just want to say, Yucca  
23 Mountain is unsuitable, unfit. Nevadans will never  
24 accept it here, not ever, no way. It's not  
25 scientifically defensible. It will contaminate the

84

1 water, our most precious resource. Say no to Yucca  
2 Mountain. Abraham, do not recommend the site.

3 Thank you.

[Other commentators spoke, then Ms. Backlund spoke again.]

4 KAITLIN BACKLUND: I think you have my name.

552274

5 Kaitlin Backlund.

6 I just wanted to bring a few things into  
7 context this evening. We've heard a lot of really  
8 terrific things here tonight, and I just want to commend  
9 all the people who have taken the time out of their lives  
10 to come be here on such incredibly short notice under  
11 really pretty difficult circumstances to get here.

12 We did have a tremendous event happen here in  
13 this country on September 11th, and for many, many years  
14 we have heard people try to belittle the danger of  
15 nuclear waste and say that it's safe. We've transported  
16 it all over the world, it's safe, we've heard that a lot,  
17 and I think it is important to have this again on the  
18 legal record.

19 I was at Carson last night and spoke about  
20 all this, and for all of you, since this is a hearing,  
21 and a hearing is about sharing information, not just  
22 necessarily speaking with somebody from the Department of  
23 Energy, the Energy Secretary, Spencer Abraham, halted,  
24 abruptly halted all shipments of nuclear materials and  
25 hazardous waste, hazardous materials on September 11th.

142

1 Now, common sense tells us that that was a

552274

2 really smart thing to do, and why that common sense  
3 doesn't translate to the Department of Energy's studies  
4 of the transportation impacts on this country of hauling  
5 the majority of waste, which is for the most part located  
6 east of the Mississippi and is going to have to be  
7 trucked, it's going to have to be brought by rail to  
8 Nevada, all the way across the country.

9       The number of shipments that will be required  
10 to make that happen far exceed the total number of  
11 shipments that have been made since we even entered the  
12 nuclear atomic age. You know, if we just look at a truck  
13 scenario, there could be as many as 100,000 shipments  
14 just to deal with the waste that will be existing at that  
15 point in time if a repository opens in 2010, 100,000  
16 shipments across the country to just deal with that part  
17 of the waste. That's a big concern to me.

18       Yesterday, Representative Markee in one of  
19 the committees in Congress, they passed by a voice vote  
20 some amendments about tightening up security around  
21 nuclear power plants, and that's a pretty smart thing to  
22 do. In addition to that, though, part of that amendment  
23 was about having protection for spent nuclear power fuel  
24 shipments. It's another good commonsense thing. That

552274

25 makes good sense.

143

1 But, again, here we have something that  
2 demonstrates to us that this is dangerous stuff. It's  
3 valuable. Plutonium is not something that we want to  
4 have roaming around the world as a commercially viable  
5 product. The stuff's nasty. It really doesn't take  
6 much, if you get it airborne, to harm a lot of people, so  
7 we don't want to see this stuff moving around, and I just  
8 feel that it's really important.

9 In addition to that, you know, the timing of  
10 these public hearings is disrespectful of the people of  
11 Nevada. This is not business as usual. This country  
12 will not be conducting business as usual for some time in  
13 the future, and you're asking a lot of people in this  
14 state to rise up and have to be incredibly strong, and  
15 it's not the first time that Nevadans have been asked to  
16 be a lot stronger than a lot of -- than a lot of other  
17 folks.

18 And the rest of the country looks to us.  
19 When Nevada is strong in saying no, the rest of the  
20 country says, hey, this isn't going to Nevada, Nevadans  
21 say no, and it's because all of you were here this

552274

22 evening that they're going to get that message. So I  
23 commend your strength in being here this evening and  
24 dealing with this very challenging issue at these really  
25 challenging times.

144

1 Thank you.